

Maxine and Manuel Lerman

25 Sass Drive

Manchester, CT 06042

February, 19, 2017

Dear Honorable Members of the Appropriations Committee,

Our names are Manuel and Maxine Lerman and we live in Manchester. We are parents of Elliot Lerman who is currently receiving state support. We have also served on the Board of Directors of MARC, Inc. of Manchester for many years, and Manuel is currently its Secretary. We are testifying on the impact of the Governor's budget on people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Elliot, who is now forty years old, received day services support from DDS after graduating high school at age 21, and has received residential supports for the past six years. Without such supports, it would have been difficult for us to care for him, and more importantly, he would not have been able to grow into a person who works productively in the community and is able to enjoy his life. Elliot is still very much part of our lives, but has a much richer and more community-oriented and productive life because of the supports he receives. We wish other families in similar situations to have the same opportunities for their loved ones.

As of now, we understand that there is no money in the Governor's budget to transition those individuals graduating high school into becoming productive members of the Connecticut work-force and to expose them to the community at large. Agencies such as MARC can provide such opportunities, thereby enriching the lives of individuals with developmental disabilities, their families, and the community as a whole. In addition to employment opportunities and community participation, these individuals require home supports if they do not have a residential placement. Furthermore, there is a huge backlog of applicants requesting and requiring residential placement that needs to be addressed.

We therefore beseech you to restore money to the budget to enable these individuals to lead a productive and satisfying life. We feel that the lives of the community at-large as well as the individuals for whom we are requesting funding will be enriched by such support.

Thank you for your time and efforts.

Sincerely,

Manuel and Maxine Lerman

25 Sass Drive

Manchester, CT 06042